113TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION

H.R.324

AN ACT

- To grant the Congressional Gold Medal, collectively, to the First Special Service Force, in recognition of its superior service during World War II.
 - 1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
 - 2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

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- 3 (1) The First Special Service Force (the 4 "Force"), a military unit composed of volunteers 5 from the United States and Canada, was activated 6 in July 1942 at Fort Harrison near Helena, Mon-7 tana.
 - (2) The Force was initially intended to target military and industrial installations that were supporting the German war effort, including important hydroelectric plants, which would severely limit the production of strategic materials used by the Axis powers.
 - (3) From July 1942 through June 1943, volunteers of the Force trained in hazardous, arctic conditions in the mountains of western Montana, and in the waterways of Camp Bradford, Virginia.
 - (4) The combat echelon of the Force totaled 1,800 soldiers, half from the United States and half from Canada.
 - (5) The Force also contained a service battalion, composed of 800 members from the United States, that provided important support for the combat troops.
- 25 (6) A special bond developed between the Cana-26 dian and United States soldiers, who were not seg-

- regated by country, although the commander of the Force was a United States colonel.
- (7) The Force was the only unit formed during
 World War II that consisted of troops from Canada
 and the United States.
 - (8) In October 1943, the Force went to Italy, where it fought in battles south of Cassino, including Monte La Difensa and Monte Majo, two mountain peaks that were a critical anchor of the German defense line.
 - (9) During the night of December 3, 1943, the Force ascended to the top of the precipitous face of Monte La Difensa, where the Force suffered heavy casualties and overcame fierce resistance to overtake the German line.
 - (10) After the battle for La Difensa, the Force continued to fight tough battles at high altitudes, in rugged terrain, and in severe weather.
 - (11) After battles on the strongly defended Italian peaks of Sammucro, Vischiataro, and Remetanea, the size of the Force had been reduced from 1,800 soldiers to fewer than 500.
- 23 (12) For 4 months in 1944, the Force engaged 24 in raids and aggressive patrols at the Anzio Beach-25 head.

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1	(13) On June 4, 1944, members of the Force
2	were among the first Allied troops to liberate Rome.
3	(14) After liberating Rome, the Force moved to
4	southern Italy and prepared to assist in the libera-
5	tion of France.
6	(15) During the early morning of August 15,
7	1944, members of the Force made silent landings on
8	Les Iles D'Hyeres, small islands in the Mediterra-
9	nean Sea along the southern coast of France.
10	(16) The Force faced a sustained and withering
11	assault from the German garrisons as the Force pro-
12	gressed from the islands to the Franco-Italian bor-
13	der.
14	(17) After the Allied forces secured the Franco-
15	Italian border, the United States Army ordered the
16	disbandment of the Force on December 5, 1944, in
17	Nice, France.
18	(18) During 251 days of combat, the Force suf-
19	fered 2,314 casualties, or 134 percent of its author-
20	ized strength, captured thousands of prisoners, won
21	5 United States campaign stars and 8 Canadian
22	battle honors, and never failed a mission.
23	(19) The United States is forever indebted to

the acts of bravery and selflessness of the troops of

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- the Force, who risked their lives for the cause of freedom.
- 3 (20) The efforts of the Force along the seas 4 and skies of Europe were critical in repelling the ad-5 vance of Nazi Germany and liberating numerous 6 communities in France and Italy.
- 7 (21) The bond between the members of the 8 Force from the United States and those from Can-9 ada has endured over the decades, as the members 10 meet every year for a reunion, alternating between 11 the United States and Canada.
- 12 (22) The traditions and honors exhibited by the 13 Force are carried on by 2 outstanding active units 14 of 2 great democracies, the Special Forces of the 15 United States and the Canadian Special Operations 16 Regiment.

17 SEC. 2. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

- 18 (a) AWARD AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the
- 19 House of Representatives and the President pro tempore
- 20 of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the
- 21 award, on behalf of the Congress, of a gold medal of ap-
- 22 propriate design to the First Special Service Force, collec-
- 23 tively, in recognition of their dedicated service during
- 24 World War II.

- 1 (b) Design and Striking.—For the purposes of the
- 2 award referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the
- 3 Treasury (in this Act referred to as the "Secretary") shall
- 4 strike the gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and
- 5 inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.
- 6 (c) AWARD OF MEDAL.—Following the award of the
- 7 gold medal in honor of the First Special Service Force
- 8 under subsection (a), the medal shall be given to the First
- 9 Special Service Force Association in Helena, Montana,
- 10 where it shall be available for display or temporary loan
- 11 to be displayed elsewhere, particularly at other appropriate
- 12 locations associated with the First Special Service Force,
- 13 including Fort William Henry Harrison in Helena, Mon-
- 14 tana.

15 SEC. 3. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

- 16 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in
- 17 bronze of the gold medal struck under section 2, at a price
- 18 sufficient to cover the costs of the medal, including labor,
- 19 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses,
- 20 and amounts received from the sale of such duplicates
- 21 shall be deposited in the United States Mint Public Enter-
- 22 prise Fund.

1 SEC. 4. NATIONAL MEDALS.

- 2 Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national med-
- 3 als for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States
- 4 Code.

Passed the House of Representatives May 21, 2013. Attest:

Clerk.

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